

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

VOL. XXXV (No. 2)

FEBRUARY, 1921

NO. 777

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Issued under the direction of the Department of
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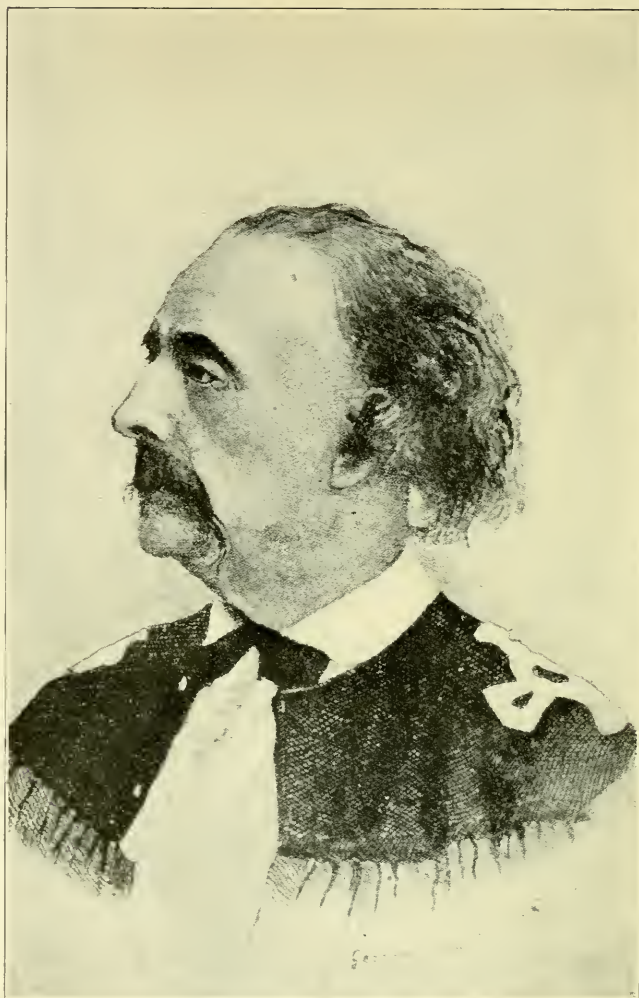
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BARBEY D'AUREVILLY.

(From *French Men, Women and Books*, by Miss Betham-Edwards.
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Frontispiece to The Open Court.

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HOMER AND THE PROPHETS

OR

HOMER AND NOW.

BY CORNELIA STEKETEE HULST.

[CONCLUDED.]

CHARACTERS IN HOMER'S POEMS, MORAL: MORAL AND ALLEGORICAL NAMES.

It is clear from what we have seen thus far that Homer's stories should not be regarded as tales designed merely to pass the time pleasantly—when we look into their deeper meanings we begin to wonder whether these Epics were not Moralities, like *Pilgrim's Progress*, for we find that the names of the characters, like Bunyan's, are appropriate to the Vices and Virtues which distinguish them. Let us not be understood to mean that Homer preaches—he is far too good an artist to do that, as Bunyan also is. Both show men as they are, dramatically and realistically so that we love them or hate them for the traits that they reveal. An examination of the names in Homer as to their derivation and root-meaning will repay our effort and throw light upon the moral intent of these stories—we shall find Mr. Pliable, Mr. Wordly-Wiseman, Mr. Facing-both-Ways among them:

Leading the vicious characters we find:

Antinous—*ἄντι νοῦς*, *without-mind, fool, idiot*. Can this be the name that his father and mother gave him when he was a child? That is not possible.

Paris—*παριᾶω*, *I sleep beside, or with*. This is the phrasing in the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi for committing adultery, a crime which was decreed the penalty of drowning in the river, for both of the guilty persons. This also is not the name that the parents of this prince gave their child at his birth, nor is that of *Alexander*, which Homer often calls him, derived from *ἀλέξω* and *ἀνὴρ-δρός*, meaning not *defender of men*, as has been suggested, but *defended of men*, which is appropriate, and a reproach to

the men who defended him, for they should, according to Babylonian law, have drowned him along with his companion in the river.

Helen—This name is usually derived from the Aryan root meaning *to shine, to beam*, cognate with the root in *Helios*, the sun, and this would be appropriate to this queen because of her exceeding beauty. However, there is an infinitive, *ἐλεῖν*, which must have been suggested to Greek hearers by the name, meaning *to grasp by the hand, to lead away, to seduce*, particularly appropriate to Helen because it fits her elopement with Paris and because ancient vase-paintings commonly represent her going away with Paris, *hand in hand*. The earliest represents her leading, and the Greeks did not regard her act lightly or condone it. As late as the laxer times of Euripides she was hated by the people, and in the *Electra* Euripides shows her own father refusing to protect her. She is afraid that the people will do her violence if she appears on the streets and ventures forth only with a muffled face.

Menelaus—*μένω*, *I stay behind*; *λαός*, *the common men, subjects*. This king is commonly called by Homer *Good-at-the-Battlecry*, and the suggestion now is that he usually shouted safely in the rear. In incidents in the *Iliad* he appears as a coward, and he was the last of the kings to return from the war to his home, except Odysseus, who was forcibly detained.

Agamemnon—*ἄγαμός*, *a marriage that is no marriage, a fatal marriage*. This is appropriate, for his wife hated Agamemnon for many reasons, and killed him. If this king was an historical character, this name can have been given him only after his death.

Clytemnestra—*κλύτω*, *I give ear to*, *μνηστήρ*, *a suitor*. This is a fitting name, for this queen gave ear to Ægisthus's wooing.

Ægisthus—*αἰξ-γός*, *a goat*. He was a goaty, lascivious, unheroic man who did not go to the war.

Agamemnon and Menelaus, unfortunate kings whose house had been shadowed by a curse of black crime for generations, are cursed in their own persons with traits that bring them sorrow—will their children be more happy? The daughter of Menelaus by Helen is named Hermione, and she is described as having "the grace of golden Aphrodite." Alluring in body, and with a name that is feminine for Hermes, patron of traders and thieves, we may expect her to be even less reliable than her mother, and "fast." Her half-brother, the son of Menelaus by a slave-mother, is named *Megapenthes*, from *μέγα*, *great*, and *πενθεῖν*, *to bewail*, a name with little promise of happiness for his parents or the new family that he will found. He will have the usual fate of the House of Atreus, his ancestors (*ἄτρεος*, *driven to ruin, baneful*). The bride of Megapenthes is a daughter of Alector, whose name is derived from *ἄλεκτορ* meaning a cockerel, and imitates the sound of a cock's crow. He, it seems, is *Good-at-Crowing*, as Menelaus is *Good-at-the-Battlecry*.

The coming generation can hardly be expected to lift the curse from the House of Atreus.

The good characters in Homer also have names that are fitting:

Odysseus—*ὄδεν*, *I travel, I journey*. This is appropriate, for he traveled far, in mind as well as in body.

Penelope—*πήνη*, *a thread, a web*, *λπιέω*, *I cover, I wrap up*. This is appropriate in reference to the famous web that Odysseus's queen was weaving as a stratagem to put off answering the suitors, on the plea that it must be ready for a winding-sheet for Odysseus's aged father.

Telemachus—*τελείν*, *to complete, to perfect*, *μάχομαι*, *I fight*, with nouns and adjectives as desired. In connection with *άνήρ*, *man*, *τέλεος* means *a full-grown man, a man who has full rule or authority, able to do or bring about*, and this fits the character and situation of Telemachus admirably, for in the first incident in which he appears in the *Odyssey* Athene finds him dreaming like a boy but rouses him to act like a man. His first act of authority is to tell his mother to return to her chamber when she has come down to speak to the bard in the presence of the suitors and to announce to her that authority in his father's house rests in him. This pleases her greatly, for it shows her that her son has *become a man*. He now proceeds to call an assembly, lay his wrongs before the people, warn the suitors to leave his palace or take the punishment which he calls upon them from Zeus, and announce that he himself is intending to undertake a journey to seek his father. The adverb *τήλη*, *far away*, is usually accepted as a root in the name of Telemachus, but has no application to his case. He is not only *completely a man*, but also *completely a warrior*, as his name implies, discreet, farsighted, courageous, obedient to command, generous enough to give the evil-doers a warning and a chance to avoid punishment, and admirable in every respect as he stands by his father through the last combat. He does not fight *from afar*, but hand to hand and face to face, with word and weapon.

Alcinous—*άλκή*, *άλκι*, *νοῦς*, *Strong-Mind*, was fitly named, the king of the sailor-nation, who helped Odysseus on his last stage home.

Arete—*ἀρέτη*, *Goodness, Excellence, Virtue*, was the charitable queen who granted Odysseus the privileges of a suppliant when he made his appeal to her. She is a fit wife for Alcinous, and her daughter, Nausicaa, is the wife-to-be for Telemachus. She is the perfect girl, as he is the perfect man and warrior. She is dreaming of her approaching wedding; Queen Helen has given Telemachus a robe for his bride to wear on her wedding day, a very beautiful robe woven by her own hands; Fate even puts the words into Nausicaa's mouth that she wishes the gods would send her *such a husband as Odysseus*—Telemachus is so very like his father in head and beautiful eyes that Helen knows him at sight as Odysseus's son when he comes unannounced to the palace of Menelaus. The lines seem all laid for this marriage, and for the founding of a new house, whose kings shall be not like those of the house of Atreus, *baneful*, and *driven to ruin*, but wise and just in their rule. With such parents as Telemachus and Nausicaa, and such grandparents as Odysseus and Penelope, Alcinous and Arete, the coming generation of the new house is

certain to be dear to gods and to men. No manlier groom and no womanlier bride were ever made for each other.

Can it have been mere accident that all of these names fitted the characters? Impossible. It is impossible, too, that these were the names given to the children by their parents, for (1) some of them are not affectionate, as that of Antinous, (2) some fit the events of mature life, as that of Paris, and (3) that of Agamemnon can have been given only after his death. Were these "nick-names," and applied to real people as we call Lincoln *Honest Abe*, a name that he bore among the neighbors? and were they perhaps caught up by the poet and passed along to the exclusion of the names that the individuals had really borne? Or were there no historic characters who bore these names, but just fit names to convey moral allegory?

It is not necessary that we should answer these questions here: later we will touch upon the questions of historic fact. It is sufficient for our purpose to realize that the names must have conveyed to the early Greeks who heard the *Odyssey* recited the vices and the virtues of the characters, and that this was done by means of native roots, strongly, as the native roots of *Pilgrim's Progress* do, more effectively than the names in Shakespeare's *Tempest* do, where the derivation is from foreign roots:

Prospero—*pro, ahead; spero, I hope*. Prospero hoped ahead when other men would have despaired.

Miranda—*miror, miranda, to be wondered at*. Miranda is Shakespeare's Wonder, the most perfect of his heroines.

Ariel—*acr, air*. He is an airy Spirit of the Air.

Caliban—*cannibal*, by metathesis. Even the transposition of the letters is appropriate and symbolical, for Caliban is dwarfed and crooked.

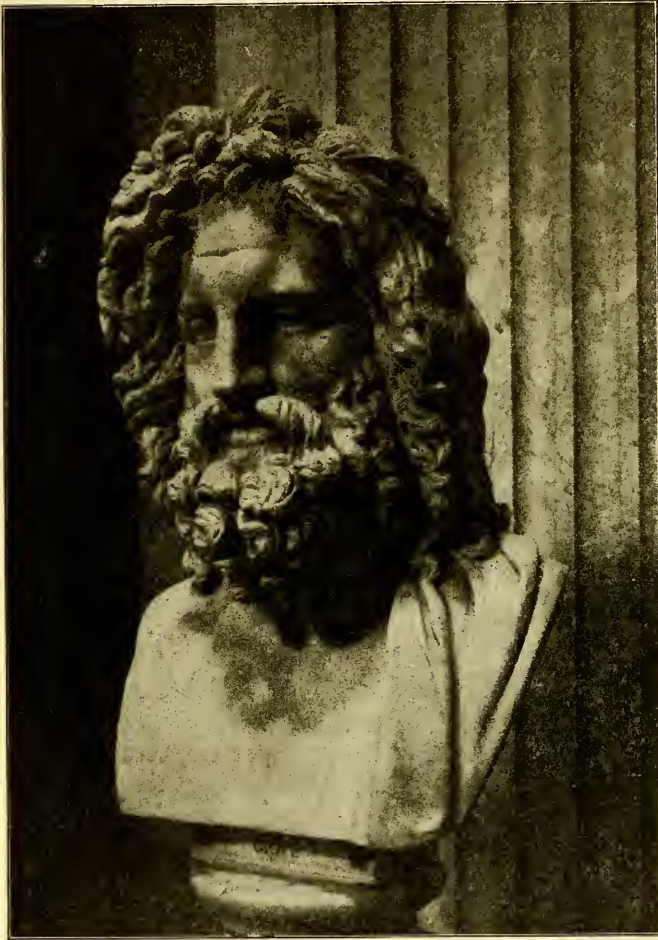
If the pleasure in appropriate names is strong in "The *Tempest*," it must have been doubly strong to the Greeks in their Homer, where it pointed more strongly the moral qualities. Should not a new translation of Homer be given us, using native roots, and preserving the full force of the names for modern readers?

THE RIGHTEOUS GODS, "GODS OF THE FATHERS":

(1) ZEUS, (2) ATHENE, (3) APOLLO.

According to Homer and Hesiod, Zeus, the Father of the Gods and King of Heaven, was a son of Time (Chronos), and husband to various consorts, whom he had chosen wisely and well in the main. Of these, Hera, the special guardian of Hearth and Home, was his Queen; Metis, Cunning Counsel, bore him a daughter, *Wisdom*, named *Athene*; and *Leto*, a fair Titan of the dark early world, bore him the glorious god of the sun, Apollo, who is Light in the moral world as opposed to Darkness. His attendants, who enforced his

rule, were Strength and Force, the same who attend all kings since his day, but in the main his rule was beneficent, wise and just. for when Athene spoke he heeded her and gave her his support, and he seems never to have been at variance with just Apollo. Zeus



ZEUS.

Colossal Mask of Carrara marble, found in Otricoli, near Rome, in the eighteenth century. (From a copyrighted carbon photograph published by A. W. Elson & Co., Boston, Mass.)

took action on the right side of a cause eventually, though he sometimes permitted an evil to continue a long while without taking action against it. Homer expresses no doubt of his wisdom, power and

goodness, and in the Homeric epics good men pray to him in their need and are saved by his assistance. Those who injured strangers and those who broke the laws of hospitality, as Paris and the Suitors did, were certain to receive their punishment from Zeus, assisted by his righteous son, Apollo, and his daughter, Athene.

In ages following Homer, critics had much to say against Zeus on the score of his many loves, and Plato and Saint Augustine were agreed that many stories told of him in this time were evil, but in early days, when plural marriages were the rule, as they had been in Israel in the time of the Patriarchs, there would have been no criticism of him on this point. The age following Homer began to feel, also, that Zeus was a tyrant and to hope for a better ruler, a hope expressed in the Myth of Prometheus, Fore-Thought, the friend of Man, who saved Man from destruction at the hands of Zeus and was therefore punished by Zeus with a kind of crucifixion. He saved Man, but himself he could not save, and endured physical torture at the hands of Strength and Force so long as the rule of Zeus endured. This Myth shows the struggle of a passing order against new ideas and proposed change, in this case, of Monarchy against the rising spirit of Democracy, for Prometheus is giving his service *to the people* instead of to the reigning King of Heaven. Such a struggle was going on in Greece in the days of Solon, and that is probably the date of the Prometheus myth. The Zeus of Homer seems not to have been subjected to criticism of this kind by gods or men, feels no fear of Prometheus and waning power, for the kings of Homer were not yet trembling on their thrones. Such a myth will rise only when the new democracy is threatening to put kings from their thrones.

The best thing that can be said for Homer's Zeus is that he is the Father of Wisdom, in the person of Athene, and of Justice and Inspiration in the person of Apollo.

"Glorious Apollo," as he is called in Homer, was represented by the Greeks as a radiant youth at the early period of manhood when ideals are still untarnished by contact with the sordid world, but, at the same time, he was a god of exceeding power, the Archer, mighty in combat, slayer of Python, the great snake of evil. If his name is derived, as has been suggested, from ἀπ-όλλύω, *I destroy utterly*, it is appropriate to his character as god of the Sun and Archer of the Silver Arrows, for just as the sun pours his beams down upon the earth, causing physical carrion to decay and purifying the earth of its contagion, so Apollo purifies the moral world

by shooting his arrows of retribution at those who do wrong. He is the god of justice, poetic justice, as he showed himself, for instance, in the case of Orestes, whom he judged to be right in killing



THE APOLLO BELVIDERE.

his mother, Clytemnestra, because she had betrayed and treacherously killed his father, Agamemnon. The expression of stern power in the face of the Apollo Belvedere is appropriate to this Archer—he has just shot one of his arrows of punishment and is looking

upon the pain it has brought to the guilty. Those who are glad that this world has a moral order must rejoice in this stern beauty.

The best lives of ancient Greece were ruled according to Apollo's laws, graven in the marble of his temple, "Know thyself," and "All things in proportion," or, "All things in restraint." These were Commandments, which, if obeyed as to riches and power would correct most of the wrongs of the world. The shrines of Apollo at Delos and at Delphi became the centers of pilgrimage for Greece.

Homer's Apollo was not the patron of the powerful kings and warriors who sought worldly advantage, and he judged men not as the world in general judges, but according to his own high standard. The special patron of Achilles was Hephæstos, who rewarded his worshiper with the cunningly wrought shield of gold and silver which he made on his forge; the special patron of Menelaus was Ares, an arrant coward when put to the test and easily defeated by those who fight with the sword of the higher ideals—the rewards he gives will be the plunder of cities; the special patron of Odysseus was Athene, and her reward to even this greatest of her votaries is wingless victory, not the greatest riches or power, but moderate, along with contentment in his human lot and the favor of God. This kind of victory has no wings and will remain with him. But Apollo was the special patron of the Blind Bard, a man without material possessions, and even without a home, for the poet's home is the whole world of the spirit, and he holds himself as only the instrument to give voice to the Song that Apollo sends through the Muse. To the Blind Bard, and to other artists who render Apollo heartfelt devotion the god will not give material rewards—only a crown of wild olive, symbolical of the greater glory that a man may win in the realm of pure spirit, exactly the opposite from the rewards of Hephæstos, but with this, high joy in his work.

In Homer's poems, does the archer god of the silver bow punish men justly when they have done wrong, and reward them justly when they have done right? Paris and Ægisthus and the suitors all suffered punishment, death, because they did not regard the laws of the gods or the rights of other men; so also the Trojans did for permitting a great wrong to exist among them and for protecting the wrong-doer; but Odysseus and all of his household, who obeyed the laws of the gods, and who offered sacrifices and prayers to the gods, received protection in their need and ended life happy. Their religion was largely that of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but the gods demanded rigid justice, and even mercy—Odysseus stayed his hand from punishing the suitors when he re-

turned until he had seen with his own eyes the wrong that each had done, and until he had given every man a final chance to mend his ways. If any should show at the last that he repented the wrong and intended to do right in the future, if any should show a will to be merciful to the beggar and the suppliant in their midst—who was, as Fate willed it, Odysseus himself—Odysseus would pardon him. The gods punished those who refused to show mercy, as when Apollo punished Agamemnon because he refused to take ransom for the priest's daughter; Achilles mutilated Hector's dead body and dragged it behind his chariot, but when aged King Priam humbled himself and came to offer a ransom for it, Zeus sent a warning to Achilles that if he refused to do this mercy he would be condemned by the gods, and punished.

In the Iliad Apollo is active sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, but this does not argue that he does not give his assent to the punishment of Troy in this war. He treats individuals always according to their deserts, and in doing this he does not change the final award of victory to the Greeks and punishment of the Trojans. He is never neutral, and he never supports a person who is base. He punishes Paris and Helen, but he also punishes the greatest of warriors in battle, Achilles, who fights on the other side, dimming his glory, hindering his progress, taking the field against him in person, and finally putting it into the mind of cowardly Paris to shoot him in the heel—this is the only way to spoil Achilles's chance in future combats, and the appropriate way to kill him, for no man can outrun him, not even Hector, so he can avoid conflict and save himself whenever he wants to do so.

Why should Apollo be so against Achilles but that Achilles is a man of low ideals, whose patron is Hephæstos, god of the forge and of things? Achilles does not fight for his cause, but for his reward, and he would ruin the chance of his nation in a righteous war in order to satisfy his own personal anger against his superior officer, in case his reward were withheld. Admitting that Agamemnon was unjust to Achilles, and punishing Agamemnon for being so, Apollo judges Achilles also wanting and punishes him, not only on the field of combat and by death, but also by his tarnished fame, for the Muse does not move the Blind Bard to celebrate him as the greatest of the warriors at Troy, though he is conceded the first in running and in personal combat. He was no tortoise (the name *Achilles* seems to be derived from *ἄ χελυς*, *no tortoise*), but he lacked the best qualities of the ideal warrior.

which Odysseus and Telemachus had, namely, wisdom and inspiration by a high ideal.

Apollo does not love Achilles, though Achilles triumphs; he does love Hector, though Hector meets defeat. Apollo could not prolong Hector's life or give his cause victory, but he can and does give him honor throughout his life, and an eternal fame. It is one of the high things in this poem that Homer, inspired by Apollo, does Trojan Hector full justice though he judges the Trojan cause wrong.

Athene does not take the attitude toward Achilles that Apollo does, but assists him in every way. When Achilles is quarreling with Agamemnon and lays his hand on his weapon to threaten the king, Athene comes to his side and stops him—in her view he might be killed if he went farther, and it would not be wise for her to lose a man who is fighting on her side, though he be far from high-minded. She is a very practical person and often, herself, resorts to means not the highest, as when she practises deceit and tells falsehoods, and compliments Odysseus for doing the same. Apollo would never do that.

Wisdom, in Odysseus, required that he should practise deceit and tell falsehoods, and he was extremely clever in his lying, so clever that when he told Athene a long story that had not one word of truth, she complimented him upon it by telling him that she could not have done it better herself! She had come to him in the form of a stranger, and he had cautiously tried to hide his identity for a time. In justice to him, it must not be forgotten that desperate men were watching for his return, intending to waylay him and put him to death before he should enter his own door, and that he was using the only means that could save him.

Those were wild times, and we shall have to admit some worse defects in Homer's hero than his lying. He was a pirate, as were his companion kings and his men at arms, who all "made" their wealth by the simple process of taking it from weak possessors, considering it more honorable to live upon the wealth produced by others than to produce wealth for themselves. It is no excuse for Odysseus that most of the so-called Christian wars, including most of the Crusades, have had a motive of riches, though this design was usually cleverly hidden by those who were to profit—in the Great War of 1914 it is a pathetic fact that the men in the armies of every side had been made to believe that their country's cause was just. We can say for Odysseus that he was no hypocrite, but an honest pirate, and that the gods of Olympus had not forbidden

such warfare. In his day the ideas of right and wrong that shall apply to all men and in all places had not been generally accepted among the men of the Mediterranean, and he could glory in the strength of the arm that enriched him without fear of being criticized on moral grounds even by the men he despoiled—they would have done the same to him if they had been able. Certainly modern imperialists will have no quarrel with him. To his credit, also, we may count it that his men understood what they were fighting for, that they were not conscripts, but volunteers, and that he shared generously with them the booty that was captured. His was no case of setting the men to do the dangerous fighting while he safely reaped the material rewards, and he was not an imperial financier, or a profiteer. He will stand comparison to his advantage with war-makers of our generation whom the world has called great, on most of the counts. Being a pre-Christian pagan, Odysseus lived by what theologians call common grace, and perhaps because of his benighted state he was not tempted to play the hypocrite as are those of our generation who have clear vision and higher ideals, but along with these an overpowering impulse for other people's possessions and a good chance to put money in their purse by starting war. Is it something toward restoring our self-respect that hypocrisy is a concession to the ideal, and therefore something to rejoice in even if cataclysms of war should continue to occur? Or is it the more of a reproach to us in modern times and of the Christian dispensation that we have added a new sin to the old pagan ones? The lying of Odysseus was not so vicious as modern hypocrisy, but then, Odysseus never faced the problems of the modern world. There seems to have been no conflict between his religious theories and his practice: his faith in his gods guided his life, nerved him to fight at tremendous odds and to gain victory in the conviction that he was sustained by wisdom and by justice.

Perhaps we should say, "by wisdom, if not always by justice," for there is one passage in the *Odyssey* in which Homer, and Apollo, are seen not to approve of pirates, such as Odysseus has been and the other kings still are. It is that in which "noble Eumæus," as Homer calls him, the slave and swineherd who tries to do right in all things, as his name assures us, *εὖ, πάντῃ, μάλομαι, ματεύομαι*, says to Odysseus in their talk at the lodge:

"Reckless deeds the blessed gods love not; they honor justice and man's upright deeds. Why, evil-minded cruel men who land on a foreign shore, and Zeus allows them plunder so that they sail back home with well-filled ships—even on the hearts of such falls a great fear of heavenly wrath."

The artistic fiction that Odysseus then proceeds to tell the good old man as to his past seems to acknowledge the point that Eumæus has been making, for it shows that Zeus had brought all of his piratical expeditions to naught—at one time Zeus thundered, and wrecked the ship; at another, Zeus struck his men with terror in the midst of an attack that they were making, but encouraged those whom they were fighting, so that his men were destroyed and he would have perished himself but for the protection of the king, to whom he became a suppliant. It is not without significance in this connection that the riches which Odysseus brings back with him to Ithaca are gifts, not spoils of war, and that he undertakes a journey to placate the god of the sea, Poseidon, after his return, but makes no more raids. Does not the Odyssey mark the time in the moral evolution of Greece when those who serve Apollo are teaching that wars of aggression and for possessions are wrong? "God gives and God withholds, as is his pleasure; his power is over all," is the comment of this good old Job among the Grecians, who himself has endured in patience one of the hardest of fates, that of a kidnapped child sold into slavery in a foreign land.

In this incident at the lodge, it is the noble slave, Eumæus, and not kingly Odysseus, whom the Blind Bard, inspired by Apollo, is giving the highest honor, and Homer becomes so moved with enthusiasm that he abandons the narrative form and breaks into apostrophe in telling the story: "Then, Swineherd Eumæus, you answered him and said." Is he not saying, in a concrete example, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and those who make for peace"? Homer can not be awarded the glory of having formulated the Beatitudes, but of having at least a vision, a vision in which the mighty on their thrones were not exalted, but those of low degree who *tried well*.

Was Odysseus dear to Apollo as well as to Athene, though in a lesser degree? We may infer that he was, from the fact that Apollo showed grace to Odysseus when he stopped at Delos on his way to Troy to offer Apollo a sacrifice—Odysseus never failed to offer fit sacrifice to the gods of his devotion. When he meets Nausicaa at the washing-pool after his shipwreck and asks her assistance, he tells her how the god, at Delos, gave him courage and comfort by showing him a vision: Beside the altar, a fair olive shoot sprang up before his eyes, and this he interprets to mean that a fair young maid will be sent to aid him in his hour of direst need. When

Nausicaa gives him the needed assistance, all is fulfilled as the god foretold.

Another point in proof that Odysseus was dear to Apollo is the fact that Apollo inspired the Blind Bard at the palace of Alcinoüs to sing the Song of the Destruction of Troy, giving praise to Odysseus as the one who, under Athene, brought the war to a close. It was poetically fit that the Blind Bard should do this without knowing that the hero he sang was the honored guest at this banquet. Perhaps Apollo rewarded Odysseus thus, and at once, because he had just done an act of the gentlest courtesy to the Blind Bard, cutting a piece of the choicest meat with his own hand and sending it to him by a page. An act of appreciation like this shows the innermost heart of a man better than his great public deeds, and Apollo will rate this kindness at its true value and reward it, as surely as he punished Agamemnon for not heeding the plea of a humble priest. Odysseus seems to have been the opposite of Agamemnon in consideration of the humble priests who served Apollo, for we are told that "through holy fear" he protected the priest Evanthe, his wife, and his son. For this act, also, Apollo rewarded him richly, for the gift which Evanthe gave him in gratitude became the means by which Odysseus was saved at another desperate moment in his career—it was that very delicious, dark, sweet wine that Evanthe gave him with which he intoxicated Polyphemus, and thereby escaped from the man-eater's cave. Because he served the god of Light, it was poetically just that it should be given him to break the power of this monster of darkness, who devoured wayfarers and suppliants when they were his guests. The reward that Apollo gave to Odysseus after his kindness to the Blind Bard was also fit—a song, an immaterial thing, but one that had the power to move the hearts of virtuous Queen Arete, King Alcinoüs, the wise counsellors and the people of the Phæacians to honor Odysseus, give him rich gifts, and assist him on his way home. Also, that song will give fame which will last as long as time shall endure. . . . No small thing is Apollo's gift of a song!

Homer, who also was a Blind Bard inspired by Apollo and the Muse, enshrined in this story other acts that Odysseus did, little things, which prove him a man of the kindest heart as well as of Wisdom. Among these was his treatment of his slaves, his kind old Nurse and his Swineherd. How Homer, and the god Apollo love the "noble Swineherd, Eumæus"! and what a true king among men they have shown him to be!

From highest to lowest, all who were good loved Odysseus; his



THE ATHENE OF PEACE.
(In the Louvre.)

mother died of grief at his absence, his devoted old dog died of joy when he heard the returned master's voice. "Your wise ways, glorious Odysseus, and your tenderness—the longing for you took joyous life away," said his mother to him brokenly when he made his descent into Hades; the love of his poor old dog, Argo, drew tears from his eyes, eloquent of what he had been and why he was worthy, not only in the sight of father Zeus and Athene, but also in that of Apollo.

The epic, an oracle in song, was inspired by Apollo, and the Blind Bard knew that all of his power was from this great god: "Sing, O Muse," is his prayer, not "Help *me* to sing," making himself nothing, or only an instrument in the hands of the god. An empty form in many other writers the invocation to the Muse is a sincere and humble prayer in Homer, and is followed by incidents deeply religious, showing the ways of gods to men: in the Iliad the first incident shows how Apollo punished the king, Agamemnon, for refusing to heed the prayer of the poor priest in behalf of his daughter, who was a captive of war held by the king; in the Odyssey the first incident shows the gods in Council approving Athene's plan to help Odysseus return to his Home and approving the punishment that Orestes, Agamemnon's young son, has just given Ægisthus. "Lo, how men blame the gods!" says Zeus, and clears himself of blame for Ægisthus's death by showing that he had warned Ægisthus against his evil courses; "Surely, that man lies in fitting ruin!" exclaims Athene. "So perish all who do such deeds"—the deed Ægisthus had done was to woo a wife and help her to kill her husband.

In Apollo, the god of the sun, Grecian mythology touched a height sublime. He was the son by whom Zeus gave light to the world, the light of justice and inspiration, by which man rises above his brute estate. With the help of the Muses, men can transcend mere mortals, in the arts, and can create, like the gods, great works which will not die. The Greeks did not make the mistake, common in darkened ages, of thinking that morals and religion have nothing to do with art. Their word *ἄρτεν*, from which our word *art* is made, meant a *fitting, or joining together*, and applied to painting, poetry, drama, sculpture, architecture—all of the high arts presided over by Apollo and the Sacred Nine. But while they used the word to apply to things made of words, sounds, marble or any other material *fitted or joined together* with beauty, they never forget that these beautiful things were also true and good, for their inspiration was

from Apollo, the god of the sun, and everything less than true and good was unthinkable as emanating from him. Just as the sun pours down his beams upon the earth, giving light, which is the condition of life, so through the Muses Apollo lighted the minds of his chosen *art-ists* and warmed their hearts with *en-thusiasm*, which means derivatively, *God-Within*, for the exaltation of spirit that man feels when the True and the Good are crowned with beauty, they recognized as God-given. Our word *poet*, also derived from the Greek, meant *maker*, or *creator*, and honored the maker of song by comparing him with the Divine Creator, for his work also is a thing of pure spirit, and at its best is immortal, as Homer's is. It is the true poet who becomes an instrument in the hands of the god to waken men to a sense of the good to be attained and justice to be rendered. Out of the heart are the issues of life, and the poet's appeal is from the *God-within* himself to the *God-within* other hearts, and so is fundamental. True poets, who ennobled and uplifted men, were leaders among the Greeks, and "poetic justice" was recognized as perfect and to be acted on, as in the Code of Solon. "Oh, that is poetry," says our blind time, and continues to pay the price of injustice and unwisdom. By a living faith in Apollo's justice and Athene's wisdom Homer's hero took courage to fight singlehanded the hundreds of desperate suiters who threatened his home, and he won; by faith in the wisdom and justice of God Athenian Solon, called the Wise and the Just and therefore selected by his people to do this political work for them, wrote the Code that made Athens a Democracy and brought her her Golden Age; by faith in Athene and Apollo, little Athens dared to defend herself against giant Persia at fearful odds, and saved herself and the Western World by her victory at Marathon and Salamis—Davids against Goliaths!

In the myths of wise Athene and just Apollo, and in the wonders they wrought in Athenian life, one must admit that the Grecian religion was earnest and noble, especially in the periods before great riches and imperial ambitions had tarnished the national ideals, before Hephæstos and Ares had become the gods of devotion to practical purposes.

By "the gods of the fathers" men were offered salvation on condition that they obey, and were visited with punishment in this world and the next if they did not keep the commandments—in fact, Greek paganism was far from being the easy and lax religion that it has been thought. In the Apollonian period it was dark,

offering little hope to even the best of men and showing many instances of trials and tragic fates that the good had been made to endure because some of the gods themselves were unwise and ill-intentioned. Witness the case of Odysseus wandering, of Ædipus blind, and of Prometheus tortured. Only a mistaken interpretation, from a lax and degenerate period, as the late Greek, the Roman and the Italian Renaissance, could justify the opinion that the Greeks held their religion lightly and thought little of family ties. In the early period, even the loves of the gods were not the *chronique scandaleuse* that some of the critics take them to be, but conveyed the best thought of their time. In the *Odyssey*, the gods are in their heaven beyond question, and punish those who do wrong in the world. . . . I was about to say, *especially in the home*, for the *Odyssey* is a story of happy and unhappy homes, and every person who violates the home is punished by Zeus and Athene and Apollo—God, in his wisdom and justice.

Aphrodite, the destroyer of homes, is "laughter-loving," according to Homer's epithet, but Athene is nobly serious, patron of the useful arts, as that of the loom and the needle, and giver of the fruitful olive; Aphrodite is held lightly among the immortals and is distrusted by wise men and women, but Athene is able to turn all wise minds to her purposes. Aphrodite brings ruin to her devotees and those who give them protection; but Athene protects her own. Her tongue is a spear, even when she talks with Father Zeus, and sometimes by pleading, sometimes with sarcasm, she wins their cause for her votaries. So, having wisely bided her time, she skilfully turns the attention of Zeus to the plight of worthy Odysseus at the Council and persuades him to take up this cause, changing the subject from Ægisthus who has been justly punished to Odysseus, who has been unjustly prevented from reaching his home:

"Our Father, son of Chronos, most high above all rulers, that man[Ægisthus] assuredly lies in fitting ruin! So perish all who do such deeds! But now my heart is torn for wise Odysseus. He, hapless man, long cut off from friends, longing but to see the smoke springing from his land, desires to die. Did not Odysseus seek your favor by offering sacrifice upon the plains of Troy? Then why are you so wroth against him, Zeus?"

Then answered her cloud-gathering Zeus, and said:

"My child, what word has passed the barrier of your teeth? How could I ever forget kingly Odysseus, who is beyond all mortal men in wisdom, beyond them too in giving honor to the immortal gods who hold the open sky? . . . Come, let us all here plan for his return."

It was skilfully done! and we note that the considerations for Odysseus as against Ægisthus are moral, and religious.

Athene is the goddess of those who love wisely and who protect wise love, such as Odysseus and his Penelope, and she must punish such as Paris and Helen and the Trojans who shelter them, for if the unwise should continue to prosper, the world would go wrong. Her character is admirably shown in the incident of the Palladium, her statue of olive wood, which she gave as a reward to the Trojans when they were true to her, many years before the Trojan War, along with her promise that she would protect their city so long as this statue was within their walls. The Trojans had prized this Palladium, or image of wisdom, as their most precious possession, but now when they turned to give protection to devotees of Aphrodite and forsook this god of their fathers, her anger rose hot against them, and it was she who delivered them into the hands of their spoilers. She led the Greeks to besiege their city, she prompted Odysseus (who was the man after her own heart), to oppose Agamemnon at the council when Agamemnon unwisely proposed to give up the siege and go home, and she led Odysseus to adopt the stratagem of the Wooden Horse to gain entry within the Walls of Troy. Finally, when the Grecian chiefs were within the walls, it was she who led them to lay hands on her guardian statue and carry it out of her temple and beyond the gates, for she must hold to her promise that so long as the Trojans had that statue their city would be safe. When the cry went up in Troy that the Palladium was no longer in the temple, the Trojans gave up all hope of Athene's protection, and their city fell. To the letter, Athene fulfilled her promise, but she also punished the Trojans as they deserved. They had chosen the laughter-loving Aphrodite in folly—they had it to repent in blood and tears in the ashes of their homes; they had defended the unfaithful wife and her tempter—they saw their own true wives and daughters led away as captives when Troy fell.

So the prophecy of Apollo came true, and Troy fell because of Paris, delivered into the hands of spoilers that spoiled her. The Archer shot true.